

## CALIFORNIA AND COAST.

## The Redding and Cedarville Stages Held Up by Masked Highwaymen.

## TICKET AGENTS' COMMISSIONS.

## Denial of Telegraphic Reports Concerning Seal Poachers in Behring Sea.

(SPECIAL DISPATCHES TO THE RECORD-UNION.)

## DISTRICT FAIRS.

Close of the Humboldt Meeting—Fine Display of Fruits at Redding.

ROCKVILLE, September 26th.—This was the last day of the fair.

The mile and a half race was won by Nellie G. Time, 2:15.

The four-year-old trot was won by Sacramento Girl. Time, 2:46.

The free-for-all in the district was won by Morleya in three straight heats. Best time, 2:29.

The two-year-old, three-quarters of a mile dash, was won by G. W. Time, 1:26.

AT REDDING.

Redding, September 26th.—The feature of the fair here last evening was the parade by Company E of the National Guard.

The fair was well attended. Every one says that it is the finest display of fruit ever made, and visitors who attended the State Fair say that this display exceeds anything at Sacramento in the way of fruit.

AT MARTINEZ.

Martinez, September 26th.—The crowd today was very large and the track excellent.

The district trotting, purse of \$150, was won by Lily Dale. Best time, 2:36.

The special trot, purse of \$250, 2:30 class, was won by Sally. Time, 2:29.

The yearling trot, one mile, was won by Hero. Time, 2:09.

AT ASHLAND.

Ashland (Or.), September 26th.—The novelty race, one mile, purse \$125, Cluckit won.

Half-mile dash, Bingo won, Ruby C. second. Time, 0:49.

MERCED RACES.

Merced, September 26th.—The races opened today with a slim attendance.

The half-mile dash was won by Red Light. Time, 0:54.

The trotting race was won by Old John.

STOCKTON RACES.

Stockton, September 26th.—The first two events were walk-overs for Conrad and Fairy for running stakes.

Three-quarters of a mile dash, Acclaim won. Time, 1:16.

Four-year-old district trotting race, the first and third money was won by Beauty M. C. the field being distanced. Best time, 2:24.

A match between the Sultan mare and Gypsy was won by the former. Best time, 2:31.

The special trot was won by Clay Duke, Foxey second. Best time, 2:31.

The three-year-old pacing, three heats, was run without a decision, when the race was postponed on account of darkness. Best time, 2:28.

ANOTHER STAGE HELD UP.

Two Masked Men Rob the Redding and Cedarville Stages.

REDDING, September 26th.—The Redding and Cedarville stage was robbed last night about twenty-five miles from Redding, near Morley's Station, at 11 o'clock. Two masked men, one a large man, the other a short and strongly built fellow, ordered Ed Brackett to stop, presenting pistols.

The first question asked was: "Are there any passengers?" The Wells Fargo &amp; Co. box and the Government pony-wagon were then thrown out on demand, from which some \$800 was extracted, the empty boxes and packages being put back in the box and sack and returned to the driver.

The robbery was not unexpected, as suspicious characters had been hanging around the locality for some time, and the Wells Fargo &amp; Co. used was stolen in the neighborhood. The robbers are supposed to be old hands at the business. One advised the other that the mail be untouched.

LOCAL RAILROAD AGENTS.

No Commissions to Be Paid Except to Authorized Solicitors.

SAN FRANCISCO, September 26th.—A new agreement among local ticket agents was signed yesterday and circulated to-day.

Last April the Agents' Association, as called, was drawn up, in which all agents solemnly swore to maintain schedule rates.

This worked well enough until one agent found that another was paying commissions on tickets. Soon commission-paying became general, and hotel runners, porters and special officers made ticket soliciting a remunerative branch of business.

As all this is demoralizing, especially to Southern Pacific main office business, where no commissions are allowed to be paid, General Passenger Agent Crocker last week attacked the commission-paying practice by a bank movement, details of which have been published. It was evident this coupon law, as it was called, would not work, so the agents yesterday met and agreed to pay no commissions except to certain authorized solicitors, and only to pay certain specified amounts. All the principal agents, except the Atchison, have agreed to this. As Mr. Bissell is away, it is not yet known whether the Atchison will join in this proposition.

THE CENSUS.

Official Returns of the Population of the Second Census District.

WASHINGTON, September 26th.—The following figures were made public at the Census Bureau to-day of the Second California Census District:

Pop. 1890, Pop. 1880, Inc. per cent.

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## AN ATTRACTIVE YOUNG PERSON.

## CHAPTER I.

"I'm afraid Miss Piggins will have to go," said the rector.

Mr. Sowerbutts, a stout, middle-aged farmer, granted his dissatisfaction. The other members of the Little Puddington School Board offered no opinion.

"Yes, I think we must give the old lady a quarter's notice, and get rid of her," continued Mr. Douthwaite. "She is terribly behind the age, there's no doubt of that. The school has earned hardly any grant for the last two years."

Mr. Sowerbutts gave another grant, meaning to express thereby his contempt alike for Mrs. Piggins's grant-earning powers, the grant, and the Education Department.

"I expect in another year the Inspector will bring down the wrath of the Department upon us in earnest. Perhaps they will dissolve the Board and order the election of a new one."

"That won't do, now," said Mr. Sowerbutts, decisively.

"Then Mr. Sowerbutts moves that the present holder of the office of schoolmistress be invited to resign, and that the Chairman be requested to insert advertisements for a new teacher in the *Church Times* and other newspapers," said Mr. Douthwaite, making a jutting of the motion as he spoke.

"Mr. Wintle seconds the motion," he added, with a glance in the direction of that gentleman. Mr. Wintle, whose eyes had been fixed the whole time on the rector's face, gravely nodded, and the rector rose from his chair to intimate that the meeting was at an end.

Mr. Douthwaite spent the whole of the afternoon in drafting an advertisement and sending copies of it to various clerical and scholastic newspapers. "Must be a sound churchwoman. One able to play the harmonium preferred," he added to the list of requirements. There was a standing difficulty about getting a not utterly incompetent performer on the harmonium at Little Puddington; and the good rector thought he might as well make the obnoxious Education Act useful for once.

The interview with Mrs. Piggins had deferred till the following morning, as being the most unpleasant part of the business. It went off, however, better than he had feared. By degrees he got the old lady to understand that if she sent in her resignation it would be granted, and she would be considered as having paid the parish and the country generally under an obligation.

"You see, Mrs. Piggins, we are obliged to follow the time," said good-natured Mr. Douthwaite, in an apologetic tone. "We can't afford to lose the grant another year, we really can't."

"Oh, I suppose not, sir," said Mrs. Piggins, fixing her eyes on the rector's face. "I've been schoolmistress in this parish for twenty years, and we've done very well without any grant. I've brought up my children to learn their catechism, and do their duty, like their fathers before me. I can't teach French and Latin, and such like, and much good it would do them if I could. However, I saved enough, thank Heaven, to be independent of every one, and—Betsy Jane Fugh, stop talkin' and go on with your sum, or I'll be the worst for ye."

The rector listened in silence, and finally made his escape, thankful that the most disagreeable part of his duty as a reformer was over.

But his difficulties were by no means at an end. The day after his advertisement appeared he received 127 applications for the vacant post; the next day brought him 213; the third day produced 96. All the applicants were able to read and write, and were of every necessary subject, and several which were not necessary, and everyone was able to produce testimonials of the highest possible character.

In his despair the rector turned to his sister-in-law, Miss Jordan, who had kept his house since the death of his wife, and humbly sued for her advice and assistance. But Miss Jordan was an elderly lady, with strong old-fashioned prejudices, and she objected to the new scheme altogether. She sarcastically advised the rector to send Mrs. Piggins—a course which was plainly out of the question. Mr. Douthwaite then turned for help to his curate, the Rev. Augustine Cope, a meek and gentlemanly young man, who acted as unpaid Secretary to the school when the rector was anything troublesome to be done. Mr. Cope took the mass of papers home to his lodgings and made an attempt to select a few of the most promising applications from the others. At the end of four hours' work, however, he found his list contained not fewer than forty-nine names—an obviously impracticable number.

At the next monthly meeting of the Board matters were no further advanced. The table of the morning paper at the rector's—where served as a Board room—was covered with letters of application and copies of testimonials, and the members of the Board sat gazing at the piles of documents in helpless dismay.

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"Come in," he cried.

"Please, sir," said Thomas, "there's a lady wishes to see you."

"But I am engaged, Thomas."

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A moment afterward a slim, upright figure, in a dainty summer costume, appeared on the doorway, and the rector rose instinctively to his feet. Only the rector retained his presence of mind.

"Thomas, set a chair," said he.

The young lady bowed with the utmost self-possession, and took the seat offered her. She was decidedly pretty. There was no doubt of that, in spite of her paleness and thin lips. Her fair hair was brought down smoothly over a brow as white as any woman could desire; her features were all delicately formed, her eyes being especially attractive. Her age it might have been difficult to guess, but a man would have admitted that she might be over twenty; a woman would have said she did not look thirty.

"Your name is—Miss—ah? Miss Grayling?" asked the rector, looking at the card which Thomas had handed to him.

The young lady bowed. As she lifted her head, she saw that the rector was still scrutinizing the card, and she comprehended the other members of the Board in one swift glance, finishing with the curate. Mr. Cope dropped his eyes. Miss Grayling smiled inwardly.

"And you have come about the vacancy in the parish school, I understand?" inquired the rector.

Again Miss Grayling bowed without speaking.

"I particularly requested that no personal applications were to be made," said the rector in an injured tone.

Miss Grayling gave a little sigh.

"I was afraid I had done wrong," she said, with her eyes on the carpet; "but I was so anxious that my application should not be overlooked, if you would kindly excuse my coming, I think you would find my testimonials satisfactory."

As she spoke she lifted her eyes to those of the reverend gentlemen, dropping them immediately in a very modest and becoming manner.

Mr. Douthwaite was mollified.

"Where have you been teaching?" he asked.

She mentioned the name of a village in Yorkshire, and Mr. Cope busied himself in hunting up her letter of application and her testimonials from a large bundle of similar documents. Having found them, he laid them before the rector in silence.

"Not very much experience, not so much as we could have wished—only six months," said the rector. "Now, we particularly wanted a certificated teacher."

"I have little doubt that I could pass the examinations, if you think it desirable," said Miss Grayling, quietly. "I think I may say I am capable of teaching the village children everything necessary."

It was, indeed, absurd to imagine that this elegant young lady was not capable of acting as preceptor to Betsy Jane Fugh and her companions; and the rector feeling this, tossed the rather scanty testimonials aside.

"I ought to tell you," he said, "that this is a very modest appointment. You know the salary is not large, and depends partly on the Government grant earned by the school. The position is not—ah—not an exalted one. By the way," he exclaimed, suddenly, "can you play the harmonium?"

"Oh, yes, sir," said Miss Grayling, with a bright and pleasant smile.

"Ah—well—we will consider your application," said Mr. Douthwaite, shuffling the papers before him rather nervously.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Miss Grayling, in a low, earnest tone, as she slowly raised her graceful form from her seat; "but would you allow me to wait in the hall, or the kitchen, or anywhere, till my case is decided on? I have a long journey before me, and if you could—"

She did not finish her sentence, but she glanced at the other members of the Board as she spoke. Mr. Sowerbutts and his friends had not, meantime, spoken a word; but now they uttered a half-articulate murmur, and the rector bowed in a stiff but courteous fashion. The modest request was granted, and Miss Grayling withdrew.

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Sowerbutts, with a very red face, as he leaned out of the gig to shake hands with his sister's visitor.

"Very well, thank you. But I must say good evening. I really must get home before dark."

"What's the need for that? Jess and I must see thee home."

"Oh, no, no! I couldn't think of such a thing. You must be so tired, and the poor horse, too. Good-bye." And Miss Grayling took a hasty farewell of her friendly, and ran down the roadway with the prettiest little steps in the world.

Meanwhile Mr. Sowerbutts was slowly turning round the unwilling Jess.

"But, John, the mare will be overdone. She can find her way home. Or I'll send Jacob with her," said Miss Sowerbutts, regretting in her heart that she had ever invited the school-mistress to the farm.

To this John made no reply, and having succeeded in turning the horse and gig he speedily overtook Miss Grayling, who was walking on ahead in the most determined manner, and he hailed her.

"What! who?" cried Mr. Sowerbutts to the mare. "Now, Miss, we'll get in it." And he held back the apron as he spoke.

"Really I can't—I can't take you back to Puddington after your journey, and I'm sure you're tired. But Mr. Sowerbutts only sat and looked at her without speaking; "there is really no necessity for it."

"If I ask you to come I mean it," said the farmer, "and I take it as a favor."

"Oh, if you put it so politely, I shall be very happy," said Miss Grayling, as she held up her little gloved hand, and was hoisted into the gig.

It was, after all, only a mile and a half to the village. For the first minute nothing was said.

"You play that there harmonium in church beautiful," said Mr. Sowerbutts, at length.

Miss Grayling laughed and turned her smiling face upon her companion.

"Do you think so? I'm not so sure of that myself," said she.

"Beautiful!" responded Mr. Sowerbutts, with emphasis. "And settin' there, in the chancel, with the red window shining on yer head, you look like a saint in glory!"

"Oh, Mr. Sowerbutts? you really shouldn't be so very complimentary."

"Lifting his double eye-glasses to his nose—the vicar of Little Shenstone. There can be little doubt as to her capability to undertake the duties. And really, if we begin hunting through all these papers, we might go further and far worse."

"Ear, ear," murmured Mr. Sowerbutts, in a hollow, bass voice, tapping the point of his stick gently on the floor, and accordingly it was settled that Miss Laura Hill Grayling should be appointed to the vacant office.

CHAPTER II.

In the course of a month the new schoolmistress entered upon her duties. The village children regarded her with mingled admiration and awe, as she came to school in her little school-room for the first time in her spotless morning gown. The dress was made of cotton, but it was neatly, even stylishly made. They gazed with wonder and delight at Miss Grayling's contemptuously flung pool. Mrs. Piggins came into the room, and she promised themselves golden days for the future.

In that particular, however, they were disappointed. The new teacher, they soon discovered, was not to be trifled with. They had to work harder than they had ever done before, but they did not mind it. They literally worshipped their schoolmistress and would no more have thought of disobeying her than of disputing the authority of the village Constable.

When the rector visited the school every Monday morning he was delighted with the order that reigned there. He thought Miss Grayling a very exemplary and superior young woman. He lent her books, which he had not thought it worth while to trouble Mrs. Piggins, and it was his duty to receive with a charming deference.

It was the custom at Little Puddington for the curate to give the school children a lesson in Bible history on Wednesday afternoons, and Mr. Cope looked forward to this lesson under Miss Grayling's auspices, with some inward trepidation. In spite of himself he felt a certain tremor as he addressed the new teacher, and yet he found himself continually desiring to speak to her. By degrees, however, the Secretary to the school when the rector was anything troublesome to be done. Mr. Cope took the mass of papers home to his lodgings and made an attempt to select a few of the most promising applications from the others. At the end of four hours' work, however, he found his list contained not fewer than forty-nine names—an obviously impracticable number.

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in the alehouses, at the doors of the cottages, in the churchyard after service. Through it all Miss Grayling went on her way, serene as usual, preserving exactly the same manner to every one as if the voice of scandal had never mentioned her name.

A little before 6 o'clock one evening the Rev. Augustine Cope knocked at the door of the pretty cottage in which Miss Grayling lived. For some months—ever since he had first seen her, in fact—the suspected curate had been under the spell of the young lady's sweet brown eyes. He had struggled with himself long and manfully. He was not in a position to marry; and Miss Grayling was not a suitable match for him. "At least that is so," he told himself. "I don't like to think of what his aunt, Miss Cope and Miss Georgina Cope, would say on being presented with a village schoolmistress for a niece. But then, he had not looked on the face of any other woman who could be called a lady—save Miss Jordan—for nearly eight months. He was in love; he could not help it; and now this unpleasant matter added at once to his love and to his embarrassment. Even now he did not know his own mind. His ostensible object was to exchange one of the harmoniums, with which he now kept Miss Grayling well supplied, for another of the same type.

"Miss Grayling," began the curate, as he seated himself in the little parlour, "this cannot be true."

"What is not true, Mr. Cope?"

"These shameful accusations, these aspersions—"

"Of course not, and I did not think that you, Mr. Cope, would pay any attention to them," said the school-mistress, with quiet dignity.

"Oh, 'not for worlds,'" exclaimed the curate; "I believe in you as I would a saint! Dear Miss Grayling—Laura—I may call you Laura?—I find it difficult to say how I feel for you—and how much I long to shield you from the calumnies and troubles of the world in the shelter of an honest man's love."

As he spoke, the curate took Miss Grayling's white and well-formed fingers between his own.

"I offer you my heart and all I have," he continued, his eyes searching her downcast face. "At least that is so little. I know we cannot marry on my present stipend, but I have youth and strength on my side. Sooner or later I must get a living, and then—and then. Oh, Laura! that you love me!"

"Mr. Cope, I feel honored and flattered more than I can say, and my heart tells me it is not indifferent to you, but—"

She paused, and the tones of the church clock striking fell on her ear.

"Mr. Cope," she exclaimed, withdrawing her fingers as she spoke, "you are more than generous, but I cannot trust myself to give you an answer now. I must not be rash, or unjust to you. Leave me now—leave me, I beg you. I will write to you to-morrow."

Somewhat surprised at this sudden dismissal, the agitated curate took his hat and stick and departed.

Next day he received a daintily-scented note from Miss Grayling, in which she said that, much as she honored him and highly as she valued his friendship, she was sorry that it was not for his interest to marry a dowless girl, and she therefore declined his proposal. Her decision, she added, was quite "irrevocable." There was but one "irrevocable" and somewhat how this circumstance did something to her mind, and with which which Mr. Cope received his letter of dismissal.

The testing examination, which was to confirm or overthrow Miss Grayling's reputation, was fixed for a Friday afternoon. The School Board meeting happened to fall on the following day. Mr. Wensley arrived, and Mr. Douthwaite and Miss Jordan went with him to the school-house. The children were all there, with clean pinafores and shining faces, but Miss Grayling was absent. Miss Jordan's face wore a peculiarly anxious expression, and she informed the rector that Miss Grayling had not been at home for three days.

Miss Jordan soon set the children to work and in five minutes the Inspector was convinced by the clearest evidence that not one of the school girls could make even a decent buttonhole, much less one like those contained in the specimens.

"You had better get rid of your superior young person as soon as you can," he said to Mr. Douthwaite as they went back to the rector's.

Next morning, however, when the School Board met they found a letter awaiting them from Miss Grayling in which she said that in consequence of the undesired aspersions which had been directed upon her, she was unable to attend, and that she would resign the post which she had had the honor of holding.

The rector was indignant, and moved the resolution that Miss Grayling's resignation be not accepted, but that in consequence of the revelations that had been made she be summarily dismissed. Mr. Sowerbutts was not present, but the other members of the Board, who had but a very limited idea of the heinousness of Miss Grayling's conduct, murmured at the severity of the sentence, and at last the rector was persuaded to let the resignation be accepted.

The following day was Sunday. It was the curate's turn to preach, the rector's to read prayers. The choir and school children were in their places, and Miss Jordan scanned the congregation with an approving glance from the rectory pew.

"Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us," began the rector.

At that moment an unwonted rustle was heard at the door, a subdued murmur ran through the assembled worshippers, and the rector, lifting his eyes, beheld the ex-schoolmistress moving up the aisle on the arm of Mr. Sowerbutts. There could be no doubt of what had happened. The curate, who had received a shock such as he had never before experienced, Miss Jordan forgot herself in her amazement, and stared at the bride as if she had been a ghost. Mr. Sowerbutts tramped stolidly on till he reached his own pew, and then, having duly intimated his wife's presence, he began to say the responses in a louder tone than usual.

The bride, in a dainty Parisian bonnet, looked very pretty. Her triumph was complete. Miss Sowerbutts retired to a pew with her sister, and the outsiders of Groby, and the schoolmistress reigned over the Mount Farm and its owner with gentle but firm authority.

"When Mr. Wensley came to Little Puddington for the next annual inspection, he was proceeding to the school-house, bearing Miss Jordan on his arm and escorted by the rector, when the party met a pony carriage, in which was seated a pretty and beautifully dressed woman. The lady bowed graciously to Mr. Wensley, and he did not remember the circumstances under which he had last seen her. That attractive smile, returned the salute. Mr. Sowerbutts glanced at Miss Jordan and smiled maliciously. Miss Jordan dropped her hand from her companion's arm, and the rector, stepping forward, whispered something in his friend's ear.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the Inspector;



